

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 604
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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USLO PEKING

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 2903

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, CH, US
SUBJECT: PRESS REPORT ON WOLFF MISSION TO CHINA

1. STRAITS TIMES FRONT-PAGE STORY JUNE 29 BY ITS
WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT MILTON CHASE, REPORTEDLY
BASED ON "EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW" WITH CHAIRMAN OF HOUSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS LESTER
WOLFF, STATES THAT "HIGH-LEVEL CONGRESSIONAL MISSION"
WILL VISIT CHINA JULY 3 TO 13 "TO EXPLORE WAYS OF NOR-
MALIZING RELATIONS WITH CHINA BY TAKING ANOTHER HARD
LOOK AT THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE." WOLFF IS CITED AS
SAYING THAT UNILATERAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE BI-
LATERAL DECLARATION HAVE CREATED PROBLEMS, AND
THAT THERE IS A NEED TO "IRON OUT SOME OF THE
AMBIGUITIES THAT EXIST."

2. WOLFF IS QUOTED AS STRESSING THAT "WE ARE NOT
GOING TO CHINA TO CONCLUDE ANY AGREEMENT ON
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NORMALIZATION NOR TO ISSUE ANY COMMUNIQUE. OUR
BASIC OBJECTIVE IS TO TRY TO ENHANCE THE NORMALIZATION
PROGRESS IN ANY WAY WE CAN WITHIN THE ESTABLISHED
U.S. POLICY." HE ADDED THAT "WE OBVIOUSLY ARE
ANXIOUS TO MEET THE NEW LEADERS OF CHINA AND HAVE
HIGH-LEVEL TALKS BECAUSE CONGRESS HAS A ROLE IN
THE NORMALIZATCON PROCESS."

3. COMMENTING FURTHER ON THE MISSION'S PURPOSE AND CONGRESSIONAL ROLE IN THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS, WOLFF IS QUOTED AS FOLLOWS: "BECAUSE OF THE CHANGES IN THE WORLD AND BECAUSE I BELIEVE THERE HAVE BEEN CHANGES IN CHINA, WE WANT TO SEE FOR OURSELVES WHAT CHANGES THERE MAY HAVE BEEN IN THE THINKING AMONG PRC'S HIERARCHY. WE WILL NOT ENGAGE IN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. OURS IS AN INVESTIGATIVE MISSION BECAUSE I HAVE FOUND THAT THERE HAVE BEEN CONFLICTS BETWEEN CONGRESS AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT. WE HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN FULLY INFORMED, ALTHOUGH SINCE MR. RICHARD HOLBROOKE HAS BEEN IN THE SPOT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, THERE HAVE BEEN CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN US."

4. STORY CONCLUDES BY NOTHING THAT WOLFF DESCRIBED CHANGES IN DEFINING NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BY REFERRING TO JAPAN'S RELATIONS WITH PRC AND TRADE OFFICE WHICH "IS AN EMBASSY" IN TAIWAN.

5. EDITORIAL IN SAME EDITION OF STRAITS TIMES NOTES: "IT IS APPARENT THAT THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ADVISERS ARE STILL EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES IN TRYING TO FORMULATE A NEW CHINA POLICY THAT WILL TAKE INTO UNCLASSIFIED

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CONSIDERATION THE "TAIWAN QUESTION." IT CONTINUES: "ITS DIFFICULTY IS THAT WHATEVER FORMULA IS DEvised TO RESOLVE THE CHINA-US-TAIWAN PROBLEM, IT WILL HAVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE NOT ONLY TO PEKING BUT SATISFY BOTH PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION IN AMERICA." THE EDITORIAL FURTHER COMMENTS: "NEXT WEEK'S CONGRESSIONAL MISSION TO PEKING IS NOT ONLY AN INDICATION OF THE EXPANDED ROLE OF CONGRESS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY FORMULATION IN CONTRAST TO THE SECRET DIPLOMACY OF THE KISSINGER ERA, BUT ALSO A SIGN THAT CONGRESS AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT BE SEEING EYE TO EYE ON SOME ISSUES SURROUNDING THE COMPLEX QUESTION OF NORMALIZATION." EDITORIAL ADDS THAT MUCH OF DIFFICULTY "IS ALSO DUE TO THE VAGUENESS OF THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE WHICH HAS GIVEN RISE TO UNILATERAL INTERPRETATIONS," AND QUERIES WHETHER "THE SHANGHAI DOCUMENT SIGNED NEARLY SIX YEARS AGO AND UNDER VERY DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES CONTINUE TO BE THE BASIS OF US-CHINA POLICY." INGRAHAM

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